

**ASPIRATION CATHETER HAVING A VARIABLE
OVER-THE-WIRE LENGTH AND METHODS OF USE**

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An aspiration catheter includes an aspiration shaft and a telescoping outer sheath which can be passed over a guidewire. The sheath includes "nesting" proximal and distal tubes. The distal tube slides within a proximal tube lumen, and the aspiration shaft slides within a distal tube lumen. The catheter can be placed in an expanded position by pushing the aspiration shaft, thereby causing the distal tube to be moved distally. The catheter can be retracted by pulling the aspiration shaft proximally so that a distal segment of the aspiration shaft is drawn into the distal tube lumen and the distal tube is drawn into the proximal tube lumen. Alternatively, a middle tube is slidingly disposed over the aspiration shaft between the proximal and distal tubes. In this embodiment, the middle tube nests within the proximal tube lumen and the distal tube nests within a middle tube lumen.